

NOISE

"I didn't sleep very well, how about you Meg?" said my father to my mother on the morning after our move to the new house. We had lived in a house on St. James Avenue between Parliament Street and Sherbourne Street 2 blocks below Bloor Street in downtown Toronto but had now moved to a house on Danforth Road in Scarborough.

"I kept waking up." said my mother. "I think it was the quietness." She then enquired how my two sisters and I had slept which was restless like she and my father.

She was right about the cause. Even those many years ago, Toronto downtown was noisy. Street Cars and automobiles seemed to run all night. While milk and bread and ice were delivered by horse drawn vehicles during the day and they added to the noise of the city.

When Valerie and I moved to the County we noticed the silence at night and then the chirping of the birds as dawn came which is certainly a much more pleasant sound than trolley cars rattling and truck engines grinding.

Last week we took a trip with McCoy Bus Co. to New York City for a few days. The noise of the city put Toronto to shame. I had never been to New York before and it was Valerie's birthday. The hotel we stayed in was in Times Square. It was a 20 storey building and although our room looked out on the back yards of the buildings surrounding us and not the street the traffic noise never ceased its roar.

As usual we looked at information about our destination and attended an information session put on by McCoys on what to expect and what to do in our relatively short stay. One bit of information that I found amusing as we walked on the crowded streets and waited for the lights to signal

OK for pedestrians to cross was that only 1 in 5 residents of New York own a car. However, since over 8 millions people live there that means close to 2,000,000 cars let alone the buses, trucks and taxi cabs. In Manhattan there are 13,000 licensed cabs and it seemed to us on our walks that most of them were surrounding us blocking the streets and maneuvering through impossibly small gaps in traffic without hitting anything.

What did you do there? I hear you asking. We decided to be tourists and see as much of the city as we could. This involved purchasing tickets for the open roofed buses and traveling around the city. On our first afternoon we walked from our hotel to the Rockefeller Centre and went up to the three levels of observation decks and gazed at the vast city spread out below us. We were advised to avoid the Empire State Building since waiting is sometimes up to four hours and the observation deck is not as nice as those on the Rockefeller Centre which is only a few storeys less in height than the Empire State building.

The next day we started on the bus tours and toured all of the major sections of the city. This took over seven hours and transfers to three different buses. The most interesting part of the trips were the tour guides who not only pointed out all the points of interest but were marvelous story tellers, quite good comedians and even sang!

When we had some showers free plastic ponchos were given to the passengers and some of the buses we were in had glass domes over the seating sections which kept you dry. I would highly recommend using the buses to see and learn about the city.

The next day we walked from our hotel up to Central Park which is quite large (over 800 acres) and well kept. Of course we took the horse drawn carriage ride and were entertained by the driver who later took our picture in the carriage. On our walk back from the park down 5th Ave-

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